



1790 (?)



INSTRUCTIONS

FOR

Deputy Post-Masters.



GENERAL *J. Nicholson* RR

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FOR

Deputy Post Masters.

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Deputy Post Masters

DEPARTMENT OF THE POST  
WASHINGTON

1875

PRINTED BY THE NATIONAL PRINTER

WASHINGTON: 1875

# GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

FOR THE

## Deputy Post-Master of

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**Y**OU are to take the following Oath of Office, directed by the Act of the IX of Queen ANNE, before you enter upon your employment, and you are to send it to me, by the first Post after.

*“ I do swear, that I will not wittingly, willingly, or knowingly open, detain, or delay, or cause, procure, permit, or suffer to be opened, detained or delayed any Letter or Letters, Packet or Packets, which shall come into my hands, power, or custody, by reason of my employment in or relating to the Post-Office; except by the consent of the Person or Persons to whom the same is or shall be directed, or by an express warrant in writing under the hand of one of the Principal Secretaries of State for that purpose; or except in such cases where the party or parties to whom such Letter or Letters, Packet or Packets shall be directed, and who is or are chargeable*

*chargeable with the payment of the Port or Ports thereof, shall refuse or neglect to pay the same; and except such Letters or Packets as shall be returned for want of true Directions, or when the Party or Parties to whom the same is or shall be directed, cannot be found; and that I will not any way embezzle any such Letter or Letters, Packet or Packets as aforesaid.*

Sworn before me the  
day of 17

No Deputy Post-Master, or Person employed under him can act until he has taken this Oath before a Justice of the Peace for the Place where he resides.

OU are to keep your office in a place set apart for that use, and not to suffer the letters to lie open in any place where persons coming to your house may have access; nor permit any person to be present at the time you are doing the business, except your Clerks or Assistants who have taken the oath of office, and for whose care and fidelity you are responsible.

You are, upon the coming in of the mail, and before you deliver any letters, to observe the following directions, viz. First, carefully tell over the Letters charged to your Office twice at least, that you may be certain if the number and Port of the Letters you receive, answer the number and port mentioned in the bill or bills sent you therewith, and if there be among them any way, or other Letters, to your stage, not charged to you in any bill, you are to mark them according to the rates that other Letters are, or should be charged from the respective places whence they came to your Office, and enter them in your book as you will find particularly directed in the precedent, marked C.

Secondly, put the whole of the Letters, received in the Mail belonging to your stage, though they are sent from different Offices, or are Way Letters, into one heap or Parcel.

Thirdly, sort them alphabetically according to the Sir-names, and then enter them in the same alphabetical order, into a book to be provided and kept for that purpose only; and write the proper date, and names of the places from whence received, at the head of the *List*; and also set the Value in Currency, of each Letter, against the respective names, as you will see done in the Specimen sent you herewith, marked A.

Fourthly, having another book, kept in the manner

as

as directed by particular instructions sent you herewith, turn to the account of Letters received into your Office (see the precedent for this account, marked C) and make the proper entries.

You are, when any of the bills sent to you with Letters are overcharged, to mark on them those Parts that are so, and what they ought to have been; and preserve all the Bills you receive on a file, and when any Letters are overcharged, i. e. single ones as double, double ones as treble, &c. you are to make allowances for such overcharges to the persons to whom the Letters are directed, and when any Letters are undercharged, i. e. double ones as single, treble ones as double, &c. you are to mark them as they ought to have been charged, and receive the Postage accordingly, and if there be, among the Letters charged to you, any which are not in your delivery, and ought to have been sent to some other Place, you are then, if you know the proper Stage for their delivery, to forward them there by the first Post, and if that Stage be farther distant from the Office they were first sent from than yours, or nearer, you are to mark and charge them from thence, and mention them as *forwarded* in the bill you send therewith, and you must likewise enter an account of the value in Currency of each missent Letter so forwarded by you, in the Column for that Purpose; and note the same in your next Comptroller's bill, that your account may be credited therewith, and you are likewise to acquaint the Post-Masters, from whose Offices any bills or Letters may come over or undercharged, or missent to you, of the mistakes they have made, by the First Post after you observe them, which you may do either on the Back of the bills you send them, or by letter as is most convenient. When you make allowances for overcharges of Postage, you must be satisfied that the demand is just, and  
you

you are to require the cover of such letter with a receipt thereon, from the person claiming such allowance; but if the cover cannot be spared to serve as your voucher, you are to take a receipt; all which covers and receipts you are to transmit to the Chief Office at the end of every Quarter with your other accounts,

You are, if you find the Post has been longer in riding his stage than he ought, to examine him Strictly as to the cause of it; and if he cannot give any Just reason, you must, by the next Post, acquaint his Master with it, and write what he says, that the cause of his delay may be known.

You are not to open or suffer to be opened any Mail or bag of Letters, except such bags as shall be sent unto you with Letters to be delivered at your Stage, unless there be an urgent necessity; and in that case you must always seal up the bag again, with the seal of your Office, and send a note therein, Specifying the reason why the said bag was broke open.

You are not to receive, or permit or consent to be received, at your Office, for the Port of any Letters or Packets, any rates, but according to the rates taxed by the Act of Parliament, an abstract from which is herewith sent you, which you are to hang up in your Office in a frame, to be preserved for your Government, and the satisfaction of all Persons paying such Postage.

You are not to trust any person whatsoever for the Postage of Letters or Packets, but at your own Risque, and if any Sum not exceeding Five Pounds Sterling, shall be due from any Persons for Letters or Packets, to them delivered by you, or which now is or shall be due, for the Port of Letters or Packets by you or your servants delivered to them, not exceeding that Value, you may recover the same by the aforementioned Act before Justices of the Peace, in the same manner, and under the

the same rules, as small tithes are by the Laws of England to be recovered; and such Debts or Sums of Money are to be preferable in payment, by the Person owing the same, or from whose Estate the same is or shall be due, before any Debt of any sort to any private Person whatsoever.

You are to cause all Letters and Packets, received by you for Persons living in town, which remain uncalled for on those days they are brought to the Office, to be carefully delivered the next morning as directed, so that the Persons receiving them may have convenient time to send their answers to your Stage to go by the next return of the Post. And you are to allow the Person employed by you to deliver the Letters aforesaid, One English copper Half-penny, or the value thereof in your Currency, for each Letter, out of the Postage charged thereon, and whenever any Letters remain in your Office undelivered for want of knowledge of the parties to whom they are directed, you are to take a list of their names and their places of abode, and affix the list in the most public place on the outside of your Office, thereby giving notice that such Letters or Packets remain in your hands, and you will publish the list in one or all the news papers printed in your Province, if the Printers thereof send any of their Papers in his Majesty's Mail: and all those Letters which remain undelivered two months after publication, you are to send to the General Post-Office at as dead Letters, and your account will be credited therewith accordingly: and if there be any particular reason why any Letter was not delivered, according to its direction, mention the same on the back of such Letter; viz. *not to be found---not called for---gone and not known where---dead---refused:* and on each bundle mark the amount in Currency it contains. If you omit sending the dead Letters with with

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You are, to use your best endeavours to Prevent any private Collection of Letters, by any Person whatsoever, within any of the Towns or Places under your care; and if you find any private Collectors of Letters or Packets, you are constantly to return the names and Places of abode, of all such Persons making such Collections, to the Deputy Post-Master General, that the offender may be dealt with according to Law. The penalty is Five Pounds Sterling for each separate offence, and One Hundred Pounds for every week that any offender shall continue in the practice of illegally collecting carrying and receiving, conveying and delivering any Letter or Letters, Packet or Packets, and every discoverer will upon conviction of the Offender be entitled to and receive one moiety of the Penalty.

By the Act of the V. of Geo: III. No ship or ves-  
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fel shall be permitted to break bulk or make an entry in any Port in the British Dominions, until all the Letters brought in the vessel shall be delivered at the Post-Office, except such as are excepted by the Act of the IX of Queen Anne, under a Penalty of Twenty Pounds for every neglect or refusal to deliver the said Letters at the Post-Office. When Letters from on ship board are brought to your Office, you are to pay the bringer a penny sterling for each Letter or Packet delivered to you, and to take a receipt specifying the names of the Captain and Ship, and from whence it came; and after stamping them with the stamp of your Office, with the month and day when received, and with the ship letter stamp, you are to foreward all such as are not in the delivery of your Office by the first Post, taxing them one penny sterling more than the usual rate from your Office to the place they are directed to; those for your Town and delivery are to be taxed at two-pence sterling each Letter or Packet, and you are to account for it to the revenue and such of them as cannot be delivered, you are to send to the General Post-Office at at the end of the quarter, with your other dead Letters for allowance, when you are also to send the original receipts for the pence you have paid, and they will be allowed in your accounts.

You are until you receive other directions from me to continue the Post in the same route, and observe the same method of conveying Letters by them, in the several bags, as has been hitherto usual from your Office.

You are not to deliver back any letter put into your Office, unless you are sure it be to the same Person who wrote or brought the same; and if the Person who brought the Letter be not the writer thereof, and should afterwards come to demand it back again, you are not to deliver it unless he shall bring you the same superscription,

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tion, written with the same hand and the impression of the same seal wherewith such Letter was superscribed and sealed.

You are not to take charge of, or send in the mail, any letters that have money, rings, jewels or any thing else of Value, other than paper or parchment inclosed, but if any Person apply to you to have such things sent, you must acquaint them that they may, if they chuse to run the risque, agree with the Post-Rider for the same, it being allowed him as a perquisite, to carry those kind of things for such persons as chuse to entrust them therewith; but that you do not in any wise undertake to be accountable for the safe deliverance thereof.

You are to permit any person who desires it, to pay the postage of any Letter he may put into your Office to be sent by Post, to any part of his Majesty's dominions on this continent where Posts are established; and you are to mark the same as paid, with red ink distinctly in the front, and mention them as such in the bill or charge you send therewith; and also send from time to time in the Comptrollers bill a true and exact account of the amount that shall be so paid to you: but you are not to receive the Packet Postage from America to Britain: no letter for any part of the continent of Europe can be forwarded from any Office in America, it must be put under cover to a Correspondent in Britain.

You are upon the making up of the mail to observe the following directions, viz.

First, carefully sort the Letters, according the several Stages they are directed for, putting all those for each Stage into a separate heap or parcel.

Secondly, write or stamp the name or mark of your stage, the month, and day of the month the Letters are put into your Office, with the proper Rate, according to the Table of Rates sent you herewith, being strictly careful,

ful, that you neither over or under rate them; and you are to observe that every single piece of paper, however small, is to be taxed as a single Letter, every Letter, Bill, Account, Invoice, &c. is by Law to be rated and taxed as so many several and distinct Letters, though wrote on one and the same piece of paper,

Thirdly, sort the letters of each parcel into single, double and treble Packets, paid, and unpaid, Ship and Inland; and then enter them in that order, in the Bill or charge to be sent therewith, and date and sign the bill with your name.

Fourthly, then tie up the Letters of each Stage in separate bundles, and enter the amount of each bill in your Book, as you will see done in the precedent, marked letter B, sent you herewith; and then putting the Letters into their respective Bags tie the same, and seal them with the Seal of your Office.

Your are not to suffer any Letter or Packet to pass in his Majesty's Mail Post-Free, excepting those franked by the persons legally authorised to frank the same, viz.

*The Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury,*

*Secretaries to the Treasury,*

*Commissioners and Secretaries of the Admiralty,*

*Principal Secretaries of State,*

*Under Secretaries of State,*

*Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, or their Secretary,*

*Secretary at War and his Deputies,*

*The Post Master General,*

*Secretary at the General Post-Office,*

*And all persons authorised to Frank by the Post Master General,*

*Surveyors of Post Roads,*

*Deputy Post Master General for N. America,*

You are not, out of friendship or complement to any person

person whatsoever, to delay his Majesty's Mail beyond the usual and fixed time for its departure.

You are to direct the Post-Riders, who go from your Stage, to wind their horns once every five miles, and three times in every town or village, and upon the meeting any Passenger on the Road; and also on his arriving at, and half an hour before his departure from, your Office.

You are to keep a just and true account of all monies whatsoever received by you, for the Port of Letters or Packets; and at the end of each quarter, that is to say, on the *fifth day of every January, April, July and October*, you are to make out a true and exact account thereof, with your disbursements, &c, in the manner as is done in the Precedent sent you herewith, marked Letter D; and send the same to the General Post Office

with the ballance thereof, either in Gold or Silver, or in good Bills of Exchange, to be allowed by me, and payable ten days after sight, at furthest; for you ease in making out this account, you have printed forms sent you.

You are strictly enjoined, not to take into your service, any Rider who hath served any other Post Master as a servant to Ride, without a certificate signed by the Master whom he last served, signifying that he had behaved himself honestly, and been diligent in the performance of his duty: and taking a Rider without such certificate, you shall be answerable for all faults committed by him with respect to the Post-Office. On employing any Rider, you are to cause him to sign the bond, and take the Oath sent you herewith for that purpose; you are to be particularly careful that such Rider perform his duty in every respect, and on his failure, to sue his bond, and prosecute him for Breach of Oath, as you shall see cause.

You are constantly to observe whether the bags coming

ing to your Office for your Stage, be sealed with the respective seals of the Offices from whence they came, and to seal with a fair impression of the seal of your Stage, the several bags which you send from thence.

By the Act of the VIIth of his present Majesty, it is enacted, That if any deputy, clerk, agent, letter-carrier, post-boy or rider, or any other officer or person whatsoever, employed, or hereafter to be employed, in receiving, stamping, sorting, charging, carrying, conveying, or delivering Letters or Packets, or in any other business relating to the Post-Office, shall secrete, embezzle, or destroy any Letter or Letters, Packet or Packets, Bag, or Mail of Letters, containing any bank note, bill, &c. or shall steal or take out of any Letter or Packet that shall come to his, her, or their hands or possession, any such bank note, bill, &c. every such offender, or offenders, being thereof convicted, shall be deemed guilty of felony, and shall suffer *death* as a felon, without benefit of clergy.

It is also enacted, by the aforesaid act, that if any deputy, clerk, agent, letter-carrier, officer, or other person whatsoever employed, or hereafter to be employed in any business relating to the Post-Office, shall take and receive into his, her, or their hands or possession, any Letter or Letters, Packet or Packets, to be forwarded by the Post, and receive any sum or sums of money therewith for the Postage thereof, shall burn, or otherwise destroy any Letter or Letters, Packet or Packets, by him, her, or them so taken in or received, or if any such deputy, clerk, agent, letter-carrier, officer, or other person whatsoever so employed, or hereafter to be so employed shall advance the rate or rates of postage upon any Letter or Letters, Packet or Packets. sent by the Post, and shall secrete, and not duly account for the money received for such advanced Postage, every such offender

or

or offenders, being thereof convicted as aforesaid, shall be deemed guilty of felony.

And by the Act of the Vth of his present Majesty, it is enacted, that if any post-boy, or rider, having taken any Mail, or bag of Letters under his care shall quit or desert the same before his arrival at the next stage, or shall suffer any person to ride on the horse or carriage along therewith, or shall loiter, or wilfully mispend his time on the road, or shall not in all possible cases convey the mail after the rate of six measured miles an hour, he shall, on conviction before one justice of the peace, be sent to the house of correction, and confined to hard labour, for any time not exceeding one month, nor less than fourteen days: And if any post-boy, or rider, shall, either by himself, or in combination with others, unlawfully collect, receive, convey, or cause to be unlawfully conveyed, any Letters, or Packets of Letters, he shall, on conviction before one justice of the peace, forfeit ten shillings, to be paid to the informer, for every Letter or Packet so unlawfully collected, conveyed, or delivered; and if the forfeiture is not immediately paid, he shall be sent to the house of correction, there to remain at hard labour for any time not exceeding two months, nor less than one month. It will therefore be necessary for you, fully and frequently, to inform all post-boys employed in your service, of the penalties they will incur by transgressing, and to exert your utmost care, not only that the riding work of your stage, or within your observation, be duly performed, but that the unlawful collection and conveyance of Letters, be effectually suppressed.

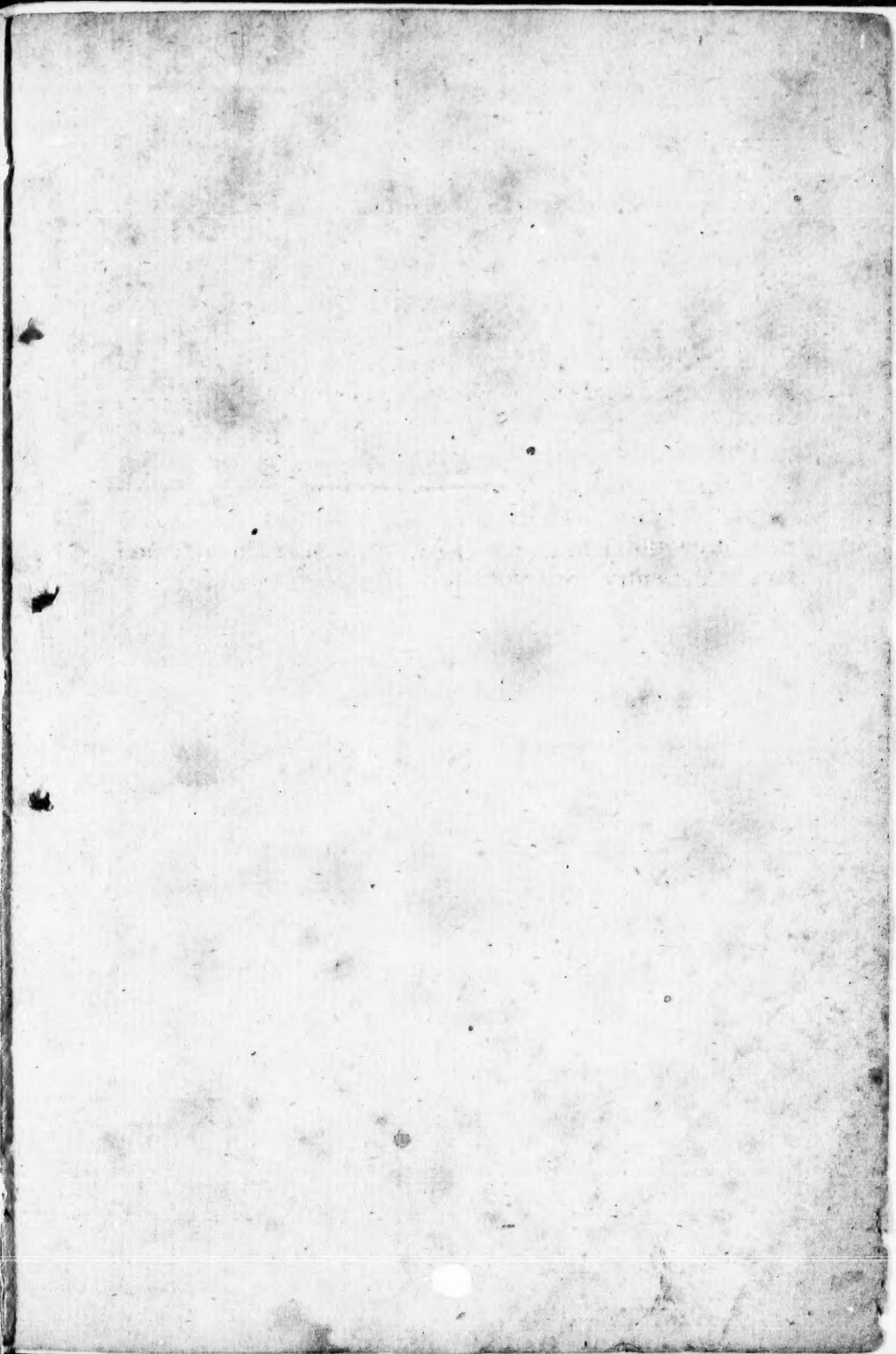
You, and all your clerks, letter-carriers, agents, and other persons employed under you, are to take notice of these several pains, and penalties, as it is incumbent on his Majesty's Postmaster-General, for the security of correspondence,

respondence, and benefit of the revenue, to prosecute all offenders.

You are diligently and faithfully to demean yourself in your said employment, and to the utmost of your ability and skill, by all lawfull ways and means to promote his Majesty's service in your place, and from time to time to keep and observe all the above mentioned orders and instructions, and all such other rules, orders, directions, and Instructions, concerning the management of your Place, as you shall receive from me, and if any misdemeanor shall be proved against you, before me, you are quietly to submit, and render up your said place, when I shall signify the same to you under my hand and Seal of Office, notwithstanding any agreement between me and you at the entry into your said Employment.

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INSTRUCTIONS

FOR

Deputy Post-Masters.

